

**Nevada Division of Environmental Protection  
Bureau of Water Quality Planning**

**Proposed Changes to the Colorado River Basin Salinity Standards  
Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 445A.143, 195 and 197**

**Fact Sheet  
July 2006**

**BACKGROUND**

Section 303 of the Clean Water Act and 40 CFR 131 give states responsibility for setting, reviewing and revising beneficial uses and water quality standards. State of Nevada authorities are contained in Nevada Revised Statutes 445A.425, 520 and 565 and water quality standards for waters of Nevada are found in the Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 445A.118 through 445A.225. Water quality standards are set for a waterbody segment at a level designed to protect and ensure a continuation of the designated beneficial use(s) set for the waterbody. Standards are based on criteria, such as, physical, chemical and biological characteristics, to protect the designated beneficial use(s). Workshops are held to obtain comments on proposed beneficial uses and/or water quality standards from federal, state and local agencies and the general public. Proposed standards are presented at a public hearing to the Nevada State Environmental Commission (SEC) for review and adoption. Standards adopted by the SEC are then subject to approval by the USEPA before incorporating into the NAC.

**SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO QUALITY STANDARDS**

NDEP is proposing to make changes to the Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) referencing the Colorado Salinity Standards, contained in the NAC 445A.143, and to amend the footnotes for Lake Mead, NAC 445A.195 and Inner Las Vegas Bay, NAC 445A.197. **No changes to the salinity criteria are proposed; only administrative changes will be made to NAC 445A.143, 195, and 197.**

NDEP is proposing to update subsection 2 of NAC 445A.143 to reflect the most recent reference to the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum Recommendations for salinity control of the Colorado River. NDEP is adding the reference to the [*Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum presented in the "2005 Review - Water Quality Standards for Salinity, Colorado River System"*], and a reference for the weighted annual average being for the [*calendar year*] into NAC 445A.143.

Additional changes involve revising the water quality standards footnotes for Lake Mead (footnote <sup>d</sup>) and Inner Las Vegas Bay (footnote <sup>e</sup>) in NAC 445A.195 and 445A.197, respectively. The language in each footnote is the same and both pertain to the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Recommendations for salinity control. The existing footnote reads [The details of this standard are set forth in the "1996 Review-Water Quality Standards for Salinity, Colorado River System" approved by the Commission on March 25, 1998]. It is proposed to replace each footnote with [*The salinity standard for the Colorado River System is specified in NAC 445A.143.*] All other Nevada tributaries in the Colorado River Basin that reference the Colorado River Basin salinity standards already have the proposed footnote language. This change will make the salinity references for all of Nevada's waters in the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control system uniform.

These proposed changes to NAC 445A.143, 195, and 197 are to reference the current Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Recommendations for salinity control of the Colorado River. These changes will make it easier to update the reference to the most current review, reduce future administrative

changes, and make the salinity references for all of Nevada's waters in the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control system uniform.

**For questions, comments or additional information please contact:**

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